

12-1827 & 956 # A RANTAN EXTRA 29

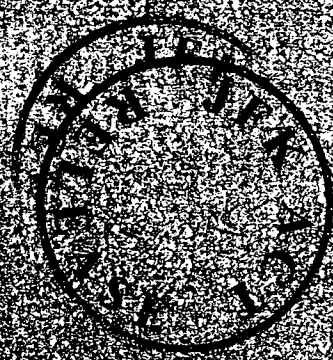
THE SHOCKING STORY
BEHIND THE CRIME THAT ROCKED
THE NATION AND THE WORLD!

CONSPIRACY?
!!YES or NO!!

The Strange Case of James Earl Ray

The Man Who
Murdered
Martin Luther King
by Clay Blair, Jr.

INCLUDING THE COMPLETE COURT RECORD



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A Move to Obscurity

The next seven years in the life of James and Lucille Ray must have been a ghastly nightmare. Caught in the crush of the depression, Ray, an ex-convict with limited skills, could find no work, even if he had been so inclined. James and Lucille apparently shuttled back and forth between the homes of her parents in Alton and his in Quincy. During this time—perhaps to cover his past, or to keep it from rising to haunt him—James Gerald Ray began to assume a variety of aliases: Gerry Ray or George Ray or Gerry Rayn or Gerry Raynes or Gerry Raines or Gerry Ryan.

Things were tough. To make matters worse—at least in the eyes of the family—Lucille was pregnant much of the time. They had been married outside the church—James Gerald was a Protestant—but Lucille still clung to her Catholicism and its stringent rules on contraception. Two years after James Earl was born, Lucille produced a girl, Marjorie, born on June 8, 1930. On her birth certificate, her surname is Raynes. A year later, June 19, 1931, came another boy, John Larry. Then four years later, Gerald, born July 16, 1935—a total of four children in seven years and there were five more to come.

Until January 5, 1935, the official records are silent about the life and times of James Gerald Ray. But on that date, he was arrested in Alton for forgery. The grand jury in Edwardsville, where he and Lucille were married, failed to indict him. Perhaps he made restitution or promised to leave town, or both. A few months after the arrest, on August 2, 1935, Lucille's mother, Mary, bought a 63-acre farm for James and Lucille in an obscure country hamlet, Ewing, Missouri, across the river from Quincy. It cost less than \$1,000, with little or no cash down, the balance in a mortgage which Mary Maher paid in full to the previous owner, Nettie Uhlein, by 1942.

The farm, lying to the northeast of Ewing, was not

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impressive. The land in the almost unyielding. Only about for planting; the remainder covered with trees. No matter the land. There was a large house for the children, and a chance to begin a new life. Ewing in August, 1935, brought the four children: James, Larry, four; and Gerald, and the name Gerry Raines.

Before the depression struck, thriving little Midwest county a shipping point on the C.B. rounding farms. There was a pit, two banks, two doctors, a yard and a business center. By early thirties had almost destroyed. The doctors, the lawyers away. The stores failed; the boarded-up ghost town. A new Ewing of its role as a rail shipping money. Foreclosed homes were \$350. A hard-working laborer's hand might earn \$16 a month; people lived on what they grew; church-mouse poor.

Poor but proud. The population posed largely of white Anglo-Saxons, Democrats" all. The Washburns. The Willows. The Whites. The Casons. They were clean, country folk who seldom drank themselves on surviving the or benefit of government handout conflict: the town had never before hasn't had to this day. "The nigger," says an old-timer, "was the highway. But they kept their lily-white character of Ewing had in a nearby town, La Grange, to the newcomer, Gerry Raines.